

In fact

For The Millions Who Want a Free Press

(No. 104) Vol. V, No. 26



412

October 5, 1942

George Seldes, Editor

Published every week and copyright, 1942, in the U. S. A. by IN FACT, Inc., 19 University Place, New York, N. Y. Phone AL. 4-6995.
One Dollar (52 issues) a year. Canada \$2.00 a year (Canadian money). Foreign \$3.00 a year.

Facts and Confessions

GOVERNMENT investigations have shown that the majority of American newspapers are corrupt. Leading editors and publishers have admitted it. Presidents, from Washington and Jefferson to the two Roosevelts, have denounced papers and news agencies as liars (they used that fine old word, too). Everyone seems to know this except the newspaper owners who go on talking about a free press year after year.

Here is a part—a millionth part—of the documentation which says the press is corrupt.

Works for the NAM: Monograph 26 (25¢ from Sup't of Documents, Washington) issued by Monopoly Investigation (TNEC) shows that the publishers' association collaborates with the Nat'l Ass'n of Manufacturers, which is the most powerful lobby in Washington and which works for special privilege and against the general welfare of the people.

80% Corrupt: Trade Commission's 73 volume report of \$25,000,000 a year corruption fund by Nat'l Electric Light Ass'n (NELA) shows most of it spent to corrupt the press. One bureau head in annual report regretted that NELA had been unable to get propaganda into more than four-fifths of the press.

Secrecy and Deceit: Report of Comm on Education & Labor, 76th Congress, 1st sess, Report 6, part 6, part 3 of NAM investigation, declares that NAM propaganda bureau, spending \$1,000,000 a year, worked in secrecy and with deceit; ran "Six Star Service" for papers; corrupted thousands.

Press Head Confesses: "We editors realize that we have lost caste with the American people. . . . Labor as a class distrusts us. It wouldn't distrust us without reason. . . ."

"The owners of newspaper investments . . . feel a rather keen sense of responsibility and they pass their anxiety along . . . to managing editors, city editors . . . editorial writers, copy desk men, reporters or what not. The sense of property goes thrilling down the line. It produces a slant and bias that in time becomes . . . a prejudice against any man or anything of any cause that seriously affects the right, title and interest of any other capital, however invested."—Wm Allen White, president, American Society of Newspaper Editors.

15,000 out of 18,000 Unfair. "There are approximately 18,000 daily, weekly and semi-weekly newspapers in the U S. Of this number 15,000 can be classed as strictly party county press. No such thing as fairness in political fights is attempted in these papers."—Frank R Kent, reactionary columnist, Baltimore Sun, etc.

Anti-Liberal. "The American press as

(This Is National Newspaper Week)

U S Press Is Not Free, Fair or Honest, Say U S Leaders . . . p. 1

Press-Radio Monopoly Kills Free Press in Most Cities . . . p. 2

LAST WEEK was national cheese week—or perhaps national apple week—it does not matter; but this week is National Newspaper Week (Oct 1-8) when all the publishers of daily and weekly newspapers of the country will print millions of words of editorials, news stories and advertisements trying to persuade the American people that there is a free press in this country. "Urge Front Display of Flag in Newspaper Week," is one of the headlines in Editor & Publisher, organ of the trade, which apparently is unaware of George Washington's dictum: "Beware of the impostures of pretended patriotism."

Editor & Publisher is the main backer of Newspaper Week. For its 1940 celebration it asked our leading citizens to send in a message hurrahing the free press. It made no comment when the President wrote:

I have little fear that freedom of the press will be abridged from external assault in this country. The danger is from internal corruption. If our press exemplifies a passion for truth and justice and fair play to all, it will avoid that spiritual paralysis and decay which are the deadly enemies of our free institutions. . . .

In 1942 the American press reached an all-time low record in lying about labor. The Daily Oklahoman originated the 40-hour week lie (stating that no one could work more than 40 hours because of a federal law) and the entire press reprinted it. It lied about defense strikes, man-days lost, loafing on the job, high wages, etc, and at the same time whitewashed Standard Oil, Aluminum Corp, the DuPonts, General Motors, General Electric, etc, all of whom were shown by Congressional investigations to have staged a sit-down, sold out to Hitler, suppressed patents, sabotaged the defense and war effort, etc. . . .

(A huge batch of press-agent material, clip sheets, offers of free pictures, etc, for "self-promoting" the press during National Newspaper Week has just reached IN FACT's office. It comes, appropriately enough, from—the Oklahoma Press Association, Inc, one of whose brightest ornaments, the Daily Oklahoman, started the vicious 40-hour week campaign of anti-labor lies. Included is the President's 1942 message, in the last paragraph of which he repeats in slightly veiled form his warning of two years ago: "The American people are vigilant of their precious heritage of a free press. They will permit neither its corruption nor its perversion for selfish ends.")

How Noted Americans View the Press

All newspapers and weeklies which do not take advertising—and the few which do and are nevertheless honest—know that the majority of big city papers in America are corrupt, the enemies of labor, and the enemies of the general welfare of the common people of the United States. IN FACT is not the only publication which has said so, although it publishes more documentary evidence than any other.

Here are a few expressions for Corrupt Press or Kept Press Week from some of our leading citizens:

To IN FACT, from Len De Caux, editor CIO News, publicity director CIO: "One of the most reactionary forces in America is the business-controlled press. As publicity director of the CIO I have been only too well aware for years of its almost uniformly hostile editorial policy toward labor and all progressive social legislation. This hostility has been shown by propaganda campaigns which have almost reached the point of hysteria at some times, and at all times by an editorial emphasis designed to discredit the progressive labor movement and to oppose its objectives."

"What we have in most of the press today is an industry for the manufacture of public opinion for private profit. What we need is a really free press serving the majority of the people, instead of a few wealthy owners and their narrow class interests."

"This situation is particularly serious now that we are at war, and a CIO Editors' Conference a short while ago adopted a resolution calling on the daily press to 'follow the example of other private industries by abandoning policies

➔ If Your Name Is Addressed in
Red See Page 3

Re-entered as second class matter March 12, 1941, at the post office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879.

which hinder successful prosecution of the war and converting itself into a war industry which will be dedicated to the defeat of the Axis.' There is still all too little indication that such conversion is taking place.

"It is imperative that labor build a powerful and popular press of its own, if we are to have a free press in this country which will really serve the people."

To IN FACT from Geo F Addes, Int'l Sec Treas, United Auto Workers, CIO:

"Freedom of the Press' to hundreds of thousands of UAW-CIO workers is just an empty, meaningless phrase. There is no such thing as 'freedom' when labor finds that practically all the large papers are rigidly controlled by reactionary interests. Editorial writers and columnists in the past few months have carried on an especially vicious campaign against the UAW-CIO—a campaign based wholly on slanderous and unfounded charges and with the evident intent of wrecking the union by creating dissension within our ranks. When the editorial and news columns of the press become equally accessible to labor and the reactionaries, then and only then will we have a 'Free' Press."

To IN FACT from A F Whitney, president, Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen:

"If 99 per cent of the corporate press of America were to cease publication tomorrow, truth might have its day in court. Until that time, organized labor, through its own press, is charged with the responsibility of uncovering and exposing the malicious lies printed daily by those who have not yet cast off their Bourbon mentalities."

To IN FACT from Upton Sinclair: "The great commercial press of the USA remains what it has always been, the agent, guardian and voice of great commercialism in our country. It will never change, except in its preferences, while the profit system endures."

To IN FACT from A E Stevenson, sec'y, Cleveland Industrial Union Council: "The failure of the commercial press, with few exceptions, to honestly report the news and be fair in their editorial columns, has served to retard the war effort. Generally, their campaigns for special interests have created confusion in the minds of the American people and in several instances have bordered on acts of treason."

"The possibility of correcting this situation lies not so much in changing the policy of the commercial press, which is controlled by big business, as it does in the further development of labor publications. It is now conceivable that labor in America, nearing united action on all important questions, can adequately support a daily paper. This is the only real answer to the half-truths and outright lies being fed to the American people by big business through the present daily papers' syndicated columns, news stories and editorial matter."

To IN FACT from Theodore Dreiser: "Yes, I will be your sponsor for a Free Press Week. It is a good idea and I wish you success with it."

"You know and I know that the American press, with a very few exceptions, is a kept press. Kept by the big corporations the way a whore is kept by a rich man. The newspapers refuse to publish anything which reflects on the corporations they serve. They will publish nothing about freedom of thought and action on the part of the people, which they are deliberately seeking to destroy."

"But they will fail. Just as the slave owners of pre-Civil War days failed. They do not understand the common man. They only understand machines and systems and methods of exploiting the common man, regardless of his necessary welfare. And, as usual, they are arousing, first, an understanding of their methods, and, second, an intense hate that will destroy them and their methods, and replace them with the democracy that America has dreamed of, and will certainly yet have."

PRESS-RADIO MONOPOLY KILLING U S FREE PRESS

AS THE UNITED STATES has grown in population, the number of newspapers sold has increased, the number of papers has decreased, the newspaper chains have grown, monopolies have been established in big as well as little cities, and now the newspaper owners have taken over one-third of the radio stations, so that in many sections of this great nation the manufacture of public opinion is the monopoly of one man or one corporation. To speak of a free press is either knavery or naiveté.

Incredible as it may seem, it is a fact that in 1916 there were 2461 daily newspapers and today there are less than 1950. In 1880 there were a few over 7,800 weekly newspapers and 909 dailies; weeklies reached a peak of 16,237 in 1906, lingered in the 16,000's to the First World War, declined from 1916 to 1935 to a total of 11,900.

But the worst factor is monopoly. Today, according to A McClung Lee, author of "The Daily Newspaper in America," one of the best books on journalism ever written, "the number of one-daily-newspaper cities has risen from 353 in 1809 . . . to 1,083 in 1937." . . . In 1206 of the 1457 cities of the US in which dailies were published in 1936, the one or more local dailies available were owned or controlled by one man or a single organization. . . . In 1230 of the 1460 daily newspaper cities in 1937 local monopolies existed. . . . In less than 100 American cities does the much-vaunted Freedom of the Press bear some resemblance to what we mean by press freedom."

As an illustration of how newspapers are killed and monopoly established, here is the case of the three newspapers of Chattanooga, Tenn.

The first battle was between the public utilities and the public. The Tenn

a whole is unfair to liberalism."—NY Post, Aug 27 1938.

Venial in 1799. "The American newspapers are the most base, false, servile and venal publications that ever polluted the fountains of society—their editors the most ignorant, mercenary, and vulgar automatons that ever were moved by the continually rusting wires of sordid mercantile avarice."—John Ward Fenno, editor, Gazette of the United States, 1799.

Doesn't Give News. "The one deadly damning count against the daily newspaper as it is coming to be, namely, it doesn't give the news."—Prof E A Ross, University of Wisconsin; American Civil Liberties Union.

Freedom or Fascism. "I have heard many publishers talk about the freedom of the press. . . . They mean the freedom of a newspaper to print what it pleases and throw away the rest. They have said that a 'free press was the greatest protection of America against Fascism, but we have not got a free press."—Heywood Brown, founder of American Newspaper Guild, Scripps-Howard columnist, fired by Roy Howard for not following the Howard-Fascist line.

F.D.R. on the Press

The Counting Room, Today. "In these past few years there has been so much resounding thunder about the freedom of the press. . . . Is the press endangered from without? . . . I have always been firmly persuaded that our newspapers cannot be edited in the interests of the general public from the counting room." Pres Roosevelt.

FDR Right. "I believe Mr Roosevelt is entirely right. . . . The greatest danger lies from within."—Paul Bellamy, editor, Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Publishers: Sham, Fraud. "The attempt of the American Newspaper Publishers Ass'n to identify its selfish, greedy interests with freedom of the press is no less than a sham and a fraud. I'm ashamed of the part that has been taken by newspapers in defeating anti-child labor legislation. They go before Congress to defeat laws against fraudulent advertising, designed to protect the consumer; they render a disservice to journalism."—Wm Evjue, editor, Madison Capital-Times.

What the U S Needs. "What this country needs is a press which puts the general good first. With notable exceptions, American publishers are chiefly concerned with profits. . . . The American press . . . ought to be freed from the dominance of men concerned primarily with finances rather than ideas. . . . Newspapers of independence, forthrightness and courage are such comparative rarities nowadays."—Virginus Dabney, Richmond Times-Dispatch.

Just Adv Sheets. "We still call them NEWSpapers, but . . . strictly speaking we have few newspapers left in America today. . . . We have daily advertising media chiefly. Advertising predominates . . . in revenue and so naturally predominates in management throughout, from editorial policy to even the minute details of circulation methods."—Harm White, Carpenter Adv Co, in The Quill.

An 8% Industry. "He (Frank Munsey) and his kind have about succeeded in transforming a once noble profession into an 8% industry. . . . As the newspapers' interest has become a mercantile or in-

dustrial proposition, the danger of commercial corruption of the press becomes greater and greater."—William Allen White.

Including Bribery. "The methods by which the Empire of Business maintains its control over journalism are four: first, ownership of the papers; second, ownership of the owners; third, advertising subsidies; and fourth, direct bribery."—Upton Sinclair in *The Brass Creck*.

No Journalistic Ethics. "Editor & Publisher, trade paper of the newspaper industry, piously publishes the Canons of Journalism in its year book—which Canons if adhered to, would put most American newspapers out of business."—Norman McKenna, *The Commonwealth* (Apr 17 '39).

News Monopolies Exist. "In 1206 out of the 1457 cities of the U S in which dailies were published in 1936, the one or more local dailies available were owned or controlled by one man or a single organization. In 1230 of the 1460 daily newspaper cities of 1937 local monopolies existed. . . . Only in such large cities as N Y, Chicago, and Philadelphia and in a few small ones, however, can one find dailies that compete for subscribers on the politico-economic front. . . . In less than 100 American cities does the much-vaunted Freedom of the Press bear some resemblance to what we mean by press freedom."—Prof A McClung Lee, author "The Daily Newspaper in America."

Rich Own Press. "Freedom of the Press is a phrase lightly used. To spread opinions through the Press is a freedom enjoyed mainly but not exclusively by the rich. To own and operate a great daily newspaper is the privilege of the super-rich. Those who pay the piper call the tune."—Dean of Canterbury.

Greatest Power in World. "Here is beyond all comparison the most tremendous force in modern life, as subtle as it is overwhelming and irresistible, and almost no attention is paid to it or to the revolution it is working. Every day in the year some thousands of newspapers are not so much, in the old phrase, moulding public opinion as perverting it and poisoning it. Often unconsciously; sometimes consciously and unwillingly; but always under the pressure of a condition so inexorable that it leaves no choice. . . . The real government lies in the hands of the men that control the news columns of our daily journals. Who are they? The men that also control our great industries, railroads and financial interest."—Charles Edward Russell.

Miss T Blames Advertising. "Just try in the column of a newspaper to say a few harsh and critical words about an industrial product! I once remarked that I thought the ordinary bakers' loaf of bread in this country could radically be

Electrical Power Co, part of Commonwealth & Southern, fought against a municipal plant for five years, the town being on what is known as the Hindenburg Line of the private utilities. Although the entire power and light industry was exposed by Congressional investigation as spending about \$25,000,000 a year to corrupt public opinion, largely through corrupting four-fifths of the American press, Tenn Electric in 1935 used the old methods to keep Chattanooga citizens paying high prices for the benefit of the corporation. Sums varying from \$20,000 to \$100,000 were raised and spent. The Tenn Co set up a dummy organization, called Citizens & Taxpayers Comm, ran tremendous ads, used the radio, filled many newspapers with untruthful propaganda claiming public ownership was a failure, and maintaining that the American (or Nat'l Ass'n of Manufacturers) way of life—which is in fact big profits at the expense of the majority—should be maintained.

The Chattanooga News, owned by Geo Fort Milton, fought the utilities; the vote was 19,000 to 7,000 for a city plant. In 1938 it was disclosed by a Congressional investigation that Commonwealth & Southern had secretly subsidized the fake Citizens Comm with \$20,000 and had determined to kill Milton's News. According to the present Attorney General Biddle, C&S made a deal with Roy MacDonald's Free Press. This pro-utilities paper was paid \$1.25 a line for pro-utility ads, whereas dep't stores, etc, paid only 54.9¢. The matter was taken to the Utilities Commission which found the utility guilty on 917 counts. The fine was \$917,000, but not one cent was collected. Leon Jourolomon of the Comm said that MacDonald's Free Press had benefited by \$36,000 excess for advertising, also \$11,000 in long term credits from the light co, also \$10,000 paid the newspaper through its attorneys, and that the Home Stores, a grocery chain owned by MacDonald, had gotten \$21,000 worth of electricity from the utility, of which \$15,000 was never collected. (Documentation: Senator Norris; Congressional Record, Jan 23, 1940, p 978.) In answer to this sensational exposure of the utility racket, MacDonald, the grocer and newspaper owner, came out with a blast against the New Deal: it was all a plot of the New Deal to ruin—guess what? Freedom of the Press!

Shortly afterwards the News was forced out of business. Advertising had a share in the destruction of this one paper which represented the public welfare (as against the public utilities). MacDonald did his bit. The Times, owned by NYTimes owners, Sulzberger and Adler, was for the utilities. The News was incorporated into the Free Press, which had started out as a grocery advertising throwaway sheet. When this happened the entire liberal press (mostly weeklies) of America deplored the murder of the News, but Editor & Publisher, chief sponsor of Newspaper Week, suppressed the name of the Tenn utility, referred merely to "the power co."

How the Grocer Got a Monopoly in Chattanooga

Politics and Big Business being what they are, absolutely nothing happened as a result of the exposure of the skulduggery involving powerful utilities, powerful pro-utility newspapers, and the chain grocer MacDonald.

The new owner called the combined papers News-Free Press. He took over the News Salvation Army basket fund, raised \$2,600, decided to buy the baskets at his own grocery. A rival grocery chain had been advertising exclusively in the rival Times. MacDonald offered to buy in the rival grocery, providing he got the advertising, and eventually he landed a slice. At the same time a leading oil company had the Chattanooga Times on its list for national advertising. MacDonald went after it. Although the ad was in type at the Times, an order came from NYC to deliver it to MacDonald, the oil firm informing the Times that MacDonald had threatened to drop its oil products from his groceries, trucks, dairy, cleaning establishment, restaurant and everything else he controlled. Here you have a portrait of a great newspaper publisher.

In addition, as many Chattanooga leading citizens testify, MacDonald, who was gradually getting a monopoly, was known to be a loud-mouthed anti-Semite. Many persons who did not like MacDonald proposed getting the Dep't of Justice to look into the matter of his milk advertising. The News-Free Press got a page ad from the town's milk producers; when they declined to renew, the grocer-publisher undercut milk in all his stores, kept a price war going until the milk producers ass'n agreed to advertise again. Then the price of milk went up again—although for a few weeks the poor thought they were getting bargains at MacDonald's stores. The new, highest price, included the cost of advertising in the MacDonald paper, an expense the public paid, and the milk people said it was forced on them by methods worth investigation by Thurman Arnold.

MacDonald waged a war with the Times for several years. It resulted in the establishment of an evening edition by the Times; also a dicker for MacDonald to drop his Sunday morning rival if (1) the Times did not start an evening rival, and (2) if the rival were discontinued. In 18 months something under \$200,000 was dropped by Messrs Sulzberger and Adler of NYC, so it became necessary for financial reasons to conclude the deal with the chain grocer. The deal was made. The Chattanooga Pub Co was set up, the Times owning 54%, MacDonald 46%; Times has 3 members on 5-member board of directors. Joint publishing operation is to last 10 years, with option to renew. Nominally each paper is independent. Both papers publish from News-Free

If your name is addressed in red and your code number is:

75* or 35 THIS IS YOUR LAST ISSUE

76* or 36 You will receive 1 more issue

77* or 37 You will receive 2 more issues

78* or 38 You will receive 3 more issues

* Former U. S. Week subscribers

If you are moving!

Cut out your name and address from the first page—write your NFW address next to it and mail with 5¢. Please give your code number on all correspondence.

Renew Your Sub Now!

Press bldg, share business dep't, advertising, business officers, circulation dep't economies. At the last minute MacDonald threatened to call it off unless he and his associate, Everett Allen, got 5-year exclusive advertising contracts, giving them exclusive control of ad and circulation dep'ts of both papers.

MacDonald now bosses the entire press of Chattanooga. Here is an illustration: his paper specified in contract it would not be required to carry liquor ads; the Times specified it would refuse all medicine advertising since most medicine advertising is fraudulent and what is not a fake is useless or a robbery. Thus the NYTimes owners Sulzberger and Adler can boast they have stuck to their ethics, but the truth is that when the year is over the operating profits of the 2 papers are divided 50-50, regardless of what ads are carried.

Editor Julian Harris was eased out. Editorial Writer Hunt Clement jr resigned. It is especially interesting to note that when NYT owners Sulzberger and Adler went over to the Republican Party in 1940 they gave Harris and Clement a vacation to coincide with the political campaign. The paper had been Democratic and these men were both Democrats and democratic. They would not prostitute themselves and they could not be corrupted, as is so often the case. This is of course one of the most flagrant examples of the corruption of the press—for which the Olympian NYTimes is to blame.

In the instance of selling out to Grocer MacDonald it should be noted that Adler, now a general in the army, was in no way to blame. The blame is entirely Sulzberger's. This man swore in 1937 to the editor of IN FACT that he was a liberal, that he had lost great advertising revenue by supporting the New Deal and Roosevelt. In 1940 he switched to the Republican Party which has all the big advertisers in it. Mr Sulzberger, incidentally, gave as an example the Sun Oil Co advertising (Pew family) which canceled NYT ads because of New Deal support. Howard Pew of Sunoco is head of the NAM's great propaganda bureau, the National Industrial Information Council, which is today one of America's greatest forces for the corruption of the free press. And Mr Pew is invited to write a piece in favor of Freedom of the Press in Editor & Publisher's Newspaper Week edition.

And so Chattanooga, like hundreds of other American cities, passes into the list of one-man newspaper towns. The local bank, the utilities, the other big anti-labor corporations, or the chain publishers like Howard, Hearst and a dozen smaller men, and in the foregoing instance a chain grocer, and of course the four or five big advertising agencies, boss the American press in most of America. The evidence of venality, prostitution and corruption stares the world in the face, and the editors and publishers annually celebrate free press week.

improved, and I and the paper were immediately subjected to blackmail from the bakers' associations. . . Just try writing an article in a magazine criticizing the organization or labor policy of a business and see what happens to the advertising. Hundreds of thousands of dollars of advertising are canceled in this country every year because manufacturers or merchants don't like remarks made in the news columns."—Dorothy Thompson.

The Well-Kept Press. "An investigation by the Senate's civil liberties committee of which Sen Rob't La Follette jr is chairman, reveals that the Nat'l Ass'n of Manufacturers spent at least \$750,000 last year on newspaper, radio, motion picture and direct mail propaganda. . . The American Newspaper Publishers Ass'n and other reactionary organizations always pooh-pooh charges that the newspapers are influenced by fat advertising revenue from utility and corporate pressure groups. But the fact remains that the utility and big business propagandists almost always keep them in line when anything important is at stake and the propagandists are sufficiently pleased with the results and impressed with the necessity of spending large sums year after year."—La Follette's Progressive, editorial, "The Kept Press."

From the DuPont Empire. "Time was when publishers were editors who endeavored to mould the opinion of their readers. . . But nowadays the real publishers are the advertisers, since their financial support of a publication is in most cases all that keeps it alive."—George Frank Lord, advertising director, DuPonts.

THE FACTS ARE...
A Guide to Falsehood and Propaganda
in the Press and Radio
by **GEORGE SELDES**

BY POPULAR DEMAND

**NOW FOR THE FIRST TIME
You Can Buy This Great Book**

PRICE \$1 [This book if published by a commercial publisher would sell for \$2.]

"The Facts Are . . . ' is a magnificent job. I especially recommend it to Navy officers, and I hope that every one of our Navy officers will read it."—Lieutenant-Commander Charles S. Seely, U. S. Navy (retired), Editorial Director, "Navy News."

MAIL \$1 FOR YOUR COPY NOW!

IN FACT, Inc., 19 University Place, New York, N.Y.

Enclosed you will find \$1 (send m.o. or check, not cash) for a copy of "THE FACTS ARE . . .", postpaid.

Name

Address

City & State

BECAUSE of numerous requests from readers, bookstores, and libraries, we are now making "THE FACTS ARE . . ." available to everybody at the non-commercial price of \$1. Or you may send in 5 subscriptions and/or renewals and we will mail you a copy FREE.

WE HAVE printed enthusiastic comment on George Seldes' book. Summed up, the judgment of those who have read it is that "THE FACTS ARE . . ." is a "weapon for victory which every American should own."